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The Bright Line

Defining The Differences Between Republicans and Democrats

The basic philosophical differences between Republicans and Democrats are strikingly clear when you compare their positions on some of the major issues in the 105th Congress. Republicans remain the champions of less taxes and smaller government, while Democrats continue to maintain their liberal course of more government and higher taxes.

EDUCATION

Republicans

Passed education reform: allowing parents to set aside \$2,000 per year in a tax-deferred savings account for their children's educational needs; regularly testing teachers and rewarding successful teachers through merit and performance pay; proposing grants for parents and schools to dramatically improve children's literacy; providing tax relief to college students; and support scholarships for low-income children allowing them to attend the school of their choice.

Democrats

Blocked efforts to pass education reform in defense of the status quo including: education savings accounts, low-income scholarships for D.C. kids, and tax relief for college students; proposed an increase in funding for the Department of Education to hire 100,000 teachers but with no proviso about their credentials; proposed creating a new federal bureaucracy to administer a new program to modernize schools; support more money for Goals 2000; and support establishing national testing for students.

GOVERNMENT

Republicans

Passed the first balanced budget in 16 years; and overhauled the Internal Revenue Service for the first time in 50 years by improving its management practices, forcing it to become a service-oriented agency and providing tax taxpayers with new rights.

Democrats

Fought against a balanced budget constitutional amendment — instead preferring to opt to leave open the opportunity for greater spending and the creation of new government programs; and initially defied efforts to reform the IRS.

HEALTH CARE

Republicans

Passed legislation: protecting and preserving Medicare; assisting millions of uninsured children through block grants; allowing seniors to subscribe to Medical Savings Accounts; and increasing the deductibility of health insurance for the self-employed; support expanding health care coverage by making it more affordable and accessible for millions of Americans and giving new rights to people with current healthcare coverage; and support increasing the quality of healthcare through medical research and early detection programs.

Democrats

Continue to promote President Clinton's failed socialized healthcare policies including: the federal regulation of everyone in private healthcare plans, decreasing access and affordability by increasing premium costs and legal liability, encouraging lawsuits against healthcare providers and employers, and granting unions a waiver from the new law while requiring all private-sector plans to comply fully with the regulations.

TAXES

Republicans

Passed the "Taxpayer Relief Act" which cut taxes \$250 billion over ten years — providing the largest tax cut in history; support legislation to further reduce taxes such as: eliminating the estate tax and the marriage penalty; further reducing the capital gains tax rate; reducing the tax rate for middle-income taxpayers, reducing the payroll tax; and remain committed to reforming and simplifying the federal tax code.

Democrats

In 1993, the Democrat-controlled Congress passed the largest tax increase in history. Since then, they have proposed new health care taxes; \$868.9 billion in taxes to fund a new bureaucracy to reduce teen smoking; and \$21.7 billion in new taxes and spending to federalize child care.

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